

I call on you to hold an official public hearing in my state.

Before the disastrous 2003 decision to weaken media ownership rules (which a federal court has now overturned), you held only one official public hearing. Further, FCC officials met behind closed doors 71 times with major broadcasters – but only five times with public interest groups. And to justify your actions, you used deceptive, industry-sponsored research data.

The will of Big Media had been heeded at the expense of American citizens and democracy itself. This has to end. Before you rewrite the ownership rules, I demand an official public FCC hearing in my state, impartial and verifiable research, and transparent debates.

It is time to put the needs of democracy – a diverse, skeptical, independent and competitive media system – ahead of profit-hungry media giants.

Please remember when making your decisions that America is a diverse melding of local cultures, backgrounds and lifestyles. No single local media outlet can effectively provide the news, entertainment and general information that all of those diverse groups want or need. And, in order to accurately reflect the demands and desires of each of those cultures, ownership of media outlets should also reflect that diversity of the local culture.

Large corporations owning the bulk of the media do not satisfy those needs. Let local voices have a chance to be heard.